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SUBJECT: MERKEL OUTLINES GERMANY'S VISION FOR NATO:
'NETWORKED SECURITY'

11. (U) SUMMARY. In a major speech in Berlin November 10, Chancellor Merkel promoted the German concept of "networked security," emphasizing that NATO's experience in Afghanistan showed that "security cannot be achieved by military means alone." Merkel argued that the "networked security" approach should be a central part of NATO's new strategic concept. In an apparent reference to Russian President Medvedev's recent European security architecture proposal, Merkel emphasized that it would not be possible to "drive a wedge" into the transatlantic partnership. She emphasized, however, that NATO should have a "close and reliable" partnership with Russia. While stressing that Georgia and Ukraine were not ready for NATO membership, she said that "we must map out a path that will lead us in this direction." Merkel focused more than half of her speech on Afghanistan, calling it "the challenge" for NATO and hammering away at the need to fully implement the "networked security" approach. END SUMMARY.

FOCUS ON 'NETWORKED SECURITY'

12. (SBU) Chancellor Merkel opened the Annual Conference of the Atlantic Treaty Association in Berlin on November 10 with a major speech on challenges facing NATO and its role in the 21st century, focusing particularly on Afghanistan (full text of speech e-mailed to NSC, EUR/CE, EUR/RPM and USNATO). The Chancellery told post that the speech was probably the most significant foreign policy speech Merkel would deliver this fall. In stressing the need for the April 2009 NATO Summit in Strasbourg/Kehl to task an update of the 1999 strategic concept, she strongly promoted the German concept of "networked security" (vernetzte Sicherheit), which emphasizes the need for military power to be accompanied by civilian resources and engagement to deal with 21st Century asymmetric threats. Merkel argued that the NATO experience in Afghanistan showed that "security cannot be achieved by military means alone." She said the key question to be addressed in the new strategic concept is the degree to which NATO is prepared to be a "political alliance" that considers "networked security to be one of its tasks." Merkel argued that in such an Alliance, military action would always be conducted "in conjunction with development assistance, backed up by a political mandate, and on the basis of regulations extending far beyond military matters."

CLOSE PARTNERSHIP WITH RUSSIA

13. (U) Regarding Russia, Merkel indicated that the next NATO Summit should send a clear signal to Russia that "we want a close and reliable partnership with Russia to the maximum degree possible." Merkel reiterated Germany's position that it is important for NATO to talk with Russia as a partner. "It is always better to talk to, rather than about, one

another." However, she repeated that NATO and the transatlantic relationship are the "strong cornerstone of our security architecture." In an apparent reference to Russian President Medvedev's European security recent proposal, Merkel emphasized that it would not be possible to "drive a wedge" into the transatlantic partnership. "Such attempts failed in the past and will also fail in the future."

GEORGIA/UKRAINE

¶ 4. (U) Merkel noted that the decision taken at the Bucharest Summit regarding the eventual NATO membership of Georgia and Ukraine "remains valid," but that neither country yet meets the conditions for NATO membership "given the current situation" in each. She said she did not see this changing in the near future. "Nevertheless, we must map out a path that will lead us in this direction." She ruled out a Russian veto on membership, noting that "third parties are not entitled to determine who will and will not join NATO."

AFGHANISTAN

¶ 5. (U) Merkel focused more than half of her speech on Afghanistan, calling it "the challenge" for NATO and hammering away at the need to fully implement the "networked security" approach. She rejected the need for a new strategy, arguing instead that the challenge was how to "translate the concept of networked security" into reality on the ground in Afghanistan. She reminded the audience that NATO was in Afghanistan to ensure that it never again became a breeding ground for terrorists and that the mission was

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supported by UNSC resolutions. She cautioned against focusing solely on the number of deployed troops, stressing the need for police officers, aid workers and other civilian specialists as well. She also emphasized the need for a comprehensive engagement by the entire international community.

¶ 6. (U) She said the goal in Afghanistan was to establish self-sustaining structures, noting that building up the Afghan national security forces was "a special challenge for -- and priority of -- our engagement." Merkel recognized NATO's successes, but stressed repeatedly the need for more engagement by the Afghan government, especially on difficult issues like counternarcotics. "We cannot fight poppy cultivation if the Afghan actors do not strongly and bravely express themselves on this issue." Finally, in a clear reference to the planned deployment of AWACS aircraft to Afghanistan, Merkel said that "progress must be made on aerial reconnaissance."

TIMKEN JR